BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS

GOOD GOVERNANCE

- $1 billion and $156.7 million budget, the fourth budget exceeding the $1 billion threshold and the 10th budget presented by three successive Yukon Party governments.

- The $80.009 million surplus will help enable the Yukon government to address future funding pressures.

- Inclusion of a Multi-Year Capital Plan that allows Yukon's private sector contractors to plan ahead in key sectors of our economy.

- Pursuing Resource Revenue Sharing discussions with the Government of Canada in concert with self-governing Yukon First Nations to ensure that resource revenues remain in Yukon for the benefit of all Yukoners.

- Continuing to successfully implement Yukon First Nation Land Claims agreements by:
  - Negotiating a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation regarding a Yukon Government water infrastructure project in Carcross;
  - Negotiating a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation regarding the F.H. Collins replacement project; and
  - Signing a Residential Land Development LOU with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation to work collaboratively to investigate development opportunities in relation to their settlement land.

- Working in partnership with communities to implement the findings of the Our Towns, Our Future Review, and launching a multi-year review of the Municipal Act in partnership with the Association of Yukon Communities.

- Working in partnership through the Northern Premiers' Forum with the Northwest Territories and Nunavut to:
  - develop a business case for a ten year THSSI type territorial health fund to present to the Government of Canada;

- together with the Western provinces through the Western Premiers' Forum and other provinces through the Council of Federation, to advance the development of a national energy framework with the Government of Canada based on two pan-territorial energy-related documents, the Pan-Territorial Renewable Energy Inventory, and the Pan-Territorial Adaptation Strategy.
- develop a Pan-Northern Workforce Strategy to focus on immediate industry needs such as the need for skilled workers across the mining and exploration sectors as well as build the capacity of northern colleges to respond to the long term needs such as the establishment of the Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining at Yukon College;
- support the pan-territorial telecommunications work based on the recommendations of a recent report, entitled "A matter of survival: Arctic Communication Infrastructure in the 21st Century," to address the communications needs of the North including the potential construction of a second fibre optic link from Whitehorse to the south to provide redundancy; and
- provide an ongoing federal/territorial collaborative effort to ensure that the Canadian Northern Economic Development Agency's (CanNor) strategy for economic development in the three territories meets northern priorities.

- Renew strategic bilateral accords with our neighbours Alaska, Alberta and British Columbia and continue to work in partnership with the members of the Pacific Northwest Economic Region.

- Continue to work collaboratively with the Government of Canada, and Yukon's Member of Parliament, and Yukon's Senator as well as through the Intergovernmental Forum involving the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, the Government of Yukon and the 14 Yukon First Nations.

- Utilizing technology to make government services available on-line or to improve existing services:
  - Yukoners are now able to access the motor vehicles branch registration services entirely in French;
  - in the case of Property Assessment and Taxation System, citizens will have access to the assessment roll and details of their individual assessment;
  - in the case of the Corporate Affairs System, businesses and lawyers will be able to submit documents electronically; and
  - in the case of the Building Safety System, citizens and contractors can apply for building permits on-line, review the status of their application, request inspections and get copies of their final approval.

- $1.115 million has been allocated to the Department of Highways and Public Works through the Records Improvement Initiative to conduct a multi-year corporate initiative that will improve records management practises across government to a standard that will support the management of digital records.

- $291,000 for planning a major Cold Storage Expansion Project for Yukon Archives in 2012-2013 and a further $2.6 million in 2013-2014 to ensure the long-term preservation of Yukon's precious archival heritage.

ECONOMY

- Yukon today enjoys one of the most prosperous economies in all of Canada.

- Between 2006 and 2011, Yukon experienced an 11.7% population growth rate, the highest in Canada.

- Yukon's economic growth rate has recorded seven consecutive years of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) gains and is forecasting a 3.9% Real GDP growth for 2011.

- Exploration expenditures for 2011 are estimated to be over $300 million, almost twice the previous record of $157 million set in 2010 and together with the placer mining create over 2,500 direct jobs.

- With three operating mines, the current mineral production value is estimated to be approximately $420 million and to employ more than 600 workers.

- Tourism, another key economic driver, is holding its own despite the economic problems in the United States and Europe with annual tourism visitation estimated to be around 320,000.

- Yukon's labour force reached a record high in January of 2012 of 20,900 people and the territory continues to have one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada with the unemployment rate for 2011 expected to be under 6% for the year.

- Four major mining projects are in the permitting stage and could employ an additional 1,000 workers.

- In a recent report, eight mining companies anticipate having an operating mine by 2015 and an additional four have planned production no later than 2018.

- Victoria Gold Corporation's Eagle property near Mayo will be in production by 2014-2015 and will employ 415 direct jobs during construction and 384 jobs for the operation phase.

- North American Tungsten reopened its Cantung Mine in October 2010 with a projected mine life of four years and will ramp up mining activity at MacTung, one of the highest grade deposits in the world, in 2013-2014.

- Focus for the near to medium term will be on natural gas, in particular Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), to meet Yukon's energy needs.

- For longer term, the focus will be on larger scale hydro-electric projects and connecting the Yukon's grid to British Columbia and/or Alaska.

- Major investments will be made in Yukon's transportation infrastructure including:
  - $15 million under the Shakwak project for the Haines Road and north Alaska Highway and a further $1 million from the Yukon Government for the north Alaska Highway;
  - $7.25 million for reconstruction of the Campbell Highway from km 10 to 190 and a further $1.5 million for surfacing;
  - $1.6 million to replace culverts at Too Much Gold and All Gold Creeks on the Klondike Highway.
  - $1.45 million to improve safety and road conditions on the North Canol Road.
  - $2.6 million for reconstruction, BST and re-vegetation work on the Atlin Road.
  - $2 million for the Takhini Hotsprings road reconstruction;
  - $500,000 for rehabilitation and surfacing of the Silver Trail;
  - $900,000 for surfacing, spot repairs, and erosion control for the Dempster Highway;
  - $500,000 for the Resource Access Road Program;
  - $1 million for surfacing and safety improvement on various secondary roads throughout the territory;
  - $1.875 million for improvement projects for the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport including taxiway improvements, rehabilitation and the installation of a second bridge or jet way;
  - $7.406 million over two years to extend water and sewer services to the south commercial area at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport;

- $1.82 million to address airside deficiencies at other Yukon aerodromes;
- $6 million for major rehabilitation including substructure improvements and deck repairs for the Upper Liard Bridge; and
- $1.56 million for rehabilitation work on the Aishihik River, Jarvis Creek, Stewart River and the Haldune Creek bridges.

- 590,000 from CanNor to continue the campaign to promote Yukon to overseas international travel trade, media and consumer markets.

- $800,000 from CanNor to fund Canada's North Marketing Campaign promoting Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut as travel destinations to southern Canadians.

- In May, Yukon will host the 2012 Canadian Tourism Commission's Go Media Marketplace in Whitehorse, the first time Go Media has been held north of the 60th parallel that will bring 150 of the top travel media from around the world.

- $5 million over five years for the Yukon Research Centre and the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre.

- $34.984 million for land development in 2012-2013 to address land availability and housing needs including:
  - Whistle Bend Phase One is scheduled for the fall of 2012 and will provide 93 single family, 8 duplex and 9 multi-family lots, plus one commercial and one school site;
  - providing $5 million to expedite the development of Phases 3, 4 and 5 of Whistle Bend by starting the detailed engineering and construction for these future phases to ensure additional building lots are available in 2014; and
  - considering options for the release of lot 262 in Whitehorse to be developed this spring for affordable rental units as well as the development of more Yukon Government land primarily in downtown Whitehorse.

- Signed a Letter of Understanding with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation (KDFN) to work together on potential residential land opportunities on KDFN's settlement land.

- Funding for the City of Whitehorse to begin the planning for future land development after Whistle Bend.

- Hiring of a Land Titles Inspector and modernizing the Land Titles System.

ENVIRONMENT

- $72,000 is being provided to Client Services and Inspections Branch of EMR to expand its capacity for conducting inspections and ensuring regulatory and environmental compliance.

- $24.768 million increase for a total of $49.985 million for completing remediation design and planning for assessment of the Faro and Mount Nansen projects.

- $452,000 for the Department of Environment to conduct a three-year Cumulative Effects Baseline Study in order to acquire information on the cumulative effects of quartz mining exploration in three areas.

- $60,000 for water monitoring equipment to gather information that will provide an understanding of the industrial impacts on waterways in the remote but highly active White Gold District.

- Creation of a Yukon Water Strategy to ensure Yukoners have access to safe drinking water, increase data collection and information such as the yukonwater.ca website, and upgrade drinking water and waste water treatment facilities in communities to meet new standards for water quality.

- $12.3 million is being allocated under the Building Canada Plan as part of a multi-year program to improve water and wastewater systems throughout Yukon in Faro, Haines Junction, Mayo and Watson Lake.

- A further $15 million is being provided under the Building Canada Plan for the construction of new wells, pump houses and treatment plants in Burwash, Carcross, Deep Creek, Dawson, Mendenhall, Haines Junction, Old Crow, Ross River, Tagish and Teslin to improve the quality of potable water in communities.

- $766,000 increase in the operations and maintenance budget for solid waste management together with almost $3.4 million in additional capital dollars, including projects identified under the Gas Tax Fund and Building Canada Fund.

- Consultation with First Nations, stakeholders and the public to seek a final plan for the Peel Watershed Region following the process set out in the Umbrella Final Agreement that protects the environment and respects all sectors of the economy.

BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE

- Another major challenge created by the territory's growing, prosperous economy is the increasing demand for more education and training facilities and programs to develop a skilled labour force.

- There are plans to develop a centre for Northern Innovation in Mining at Yukon College.

- $75,000 for an annual Business Training Fund to help Yukon businesses access training opportunities to further contribute to Yukon's economic growth.

- $1.86 million to extend the Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) program to 2016.

- $1.293 million for the F.H. Collins Replacement Project.

- New Community, Heritage, Adventure, Outdoors and Skills 9 (CHAOS) program to be offered at the Wood Street Centre to provide integration of the subject area and develops understanding and connections to First Nation knowledge, traditions, skills, values and beliefs.

- $2.385 million for the Arrest Processing Unit, formerly known as the Secure Assessment Centre, to replace the RCMP detachment cells and provide a more humane way of processing prisoners who will have access to 24 hour nursing and specially trained correctional staff.

- Establishment of the Yukon Police Council, a recommendation from the "Sharing Common Ground" report.

- Proposed development of a major, certified land-based treatment program in Yukon at Jackson Lake in collaboration with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation and the other 13 Yukon First Nations with a contribution of $1 million coming from the Government of Yukon over the course of its mandate.

- The Yukon Housing Corporation through Economic Stimulus funding has constructed in excess of 125 new units along with upgrading 350 units to better meet the housing needs of low and moderate income earners.

- $4.5 million for a second stage housing facility in Whitehorse in conjunction with Kaushee's.

- $4.048 million to deal with the increase in costs and volumes of hospital claims.

- $561,000 increase in funding to help NGO's keep up with increased costs.

- $65,000 to support the Challenge program for people with mental disabilities to learn life and job skills at Bridges Café in Shipyards Park.

- $797,000 to provide staff for six additional beds at the Whitehorse General Hospital.

- $60,000 to begin capital planning for the replacement of the Sarah Steele Building in Whitehorse.

- $457,000 to add 6 FTE's to meet the significant growth in the Home Care client numbers and the complexity of care needs.

- $653,000 for planning for the replacement of McDonald Lodge in Dawson City.

- $110,000 for a feasibility study and functional planning for continuing care.

- $2.244 million for a 10-year lease for the Thomson Centre and operation and maintenance of an additional ten bed care unit.

- $7.3 million for a new Emergency Response Centre that will serve as Whitehorse's primary ambulance station in addition to the Riverdale Station.

- $300,000 to commence work on the planning and design of a new Beaver Creek Fire Hall to house both the Beaver Creek Volunteer Fire Department and the community EMS volunteers.

- $3 million under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund to complete the last phase of the Whitehorse Waterfront Development project.

- $7 million to construct a new recreation centre in Ross River.